

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the amendments and remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

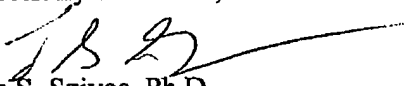
Claims 1-11 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 7, 8 and 10 stand rejected as allegedly unpatentable over the disclosure of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0195565 to Lecoq and Claims 2-6, 9 and 11 are objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Applicants thankfully acknowledge the Examiner's statement that Claims 2-6, 9 and 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

To expedite prosecution of the present case and without conceding to the merits of the rejection raised in the present Office Action, applicants have amended Claims 1 and 10 to incorporate the limitation of Claim 3 and further deleted Claim 3 from the present application. Applicants have also amended Claim 4 to be dependent on Claim 1. In addition, applicants have added new claims, i.e., Claims 12-16. Claim 12 is an independent claim including all of the limitations of original Claims 1 and 2, and Claims 13-16 are dependent on Claim 12. Since applicants have merely rewritten the allowable subject matter, these amendments do not introduce any new matter into the present application.

Thus, in view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, it is firmly believed that the present case is in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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